

Cedar Valley Catholic Schools
Strategic Plan Phase One
I-Jobs Grant----Community Support Letters

Mayor Tim Hurley, Mayor
City of Waterloo, Iowa

Steven Schmitt, Councilman at Large, Owner
City of Waterloo, Iowa
Schmitt Telecom

Reggie Schmitt, Ward 1 Councilman, Mayor Pro Tem
City of Waterloo, Iowa

Edward Gallagher, Jr., Attorney
Gallagher, Langlas & Gallagher, P.C.

Geoffrey Grimes, AIA REFP, Partner
StruXture Architects

Donald Bergan, Retired Senior Partner
Bergan, Paulsen and Company, P.C.

Steven Duggan, CPA, President and Managing Principal
Hogan-Hansen Certified Public Accountants and Consultants

John McCoy, Attorney
McCoy, Riley, Shea, & Bevel, P.L.C.



CITY OF WATERLOO, IOWA

CITY HALL

715 MULBERRY STREET 50703

July 30, 2009

Mayor
TIMOTHY J.
HURLEY

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At-Large

STEVE
SCHMITT
At-Large

I-Jobs Grant Committee and Board
Iowa's Infrastructure Investment Initiative

Letter of Support for the application submitted by Cedar Valley Catholic Schools

Dear Sir or Madam:

I write this letter in strong support of the application submitted by Cedar Valley Catholic Schools (CVCS) for their public construction project. Cedar Valley Catholic Schools have a strong tradition of excellence in education in the Waterloo community and Black Hawk County. The application submitted by CVCS will support their current Strategic Plan vision of updating facilities, as well as maintaining a strong educational system.

This public project will have a strong economic impact on our community. I understand that approximately 118 jobs will be created as a result of the project proposed by CVCS. Several more jobs will be retained. The initial planning for the project is complete, as three years were spent in a Strategic Plan process to find the best opportunity for the school system. If granted funding, CVCS would be ready to move forward with construction this fall, pumping much needed dollars into our local and regional economy immediately.

As Mayor of Waterloo, I have a vested interest in this project, as it will enhance the community in which we live by continuing to provide a strong educational alternative. As we work to draw more businesses and industry to our city, it is important to highlight varied educational opportunities. The CVCS system also has produced many quality, well-prepared leaders for our community. Current students in the system provide service to our community on a regular basis as part of their curriculum and service-oriented education. CVCS provides an education to a diverse population of students and works to enroll all who wish a Catholic Christian education in a safe, challenging environment.

I am in full support of the grant application of CVCS and strongly urge you to consider and accept their proposal. Doing so will allow our community to benefit with an increase in high quality jobs and even stronger educational program.

Sincerely,

Tim Hurley, Mayor
City of Waterloo, Iowa

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in regards to the I-Jobs program and grant process, in support of the Cedar Valley Catholic Schools system. As a locally elected official (Waterloo City Council member), I have seen first hand the value and impact of some of the state's programs affecting our local flood victims. These programs have been very helpful to both the individuals affected and also to the local government agencies. I know the Cedar Valley has been adversely affected first by the floods and now by the stagnate economy, and I believe the building projects proposed by the Cedar Valley Catholic Schools system would positively impact the local economy and job market.

As a small business owner, I greatly appreciate our local educational system. I believe the variety of both public and parochial school choices enhances the educational opportunities for our children, and helps develop them into the responsible and productive citizens they will become. Our local contributors have been negatively affected by the various issues mentioned above, and this grant would positively incentivize our supporters to help us fulfill our goal of expanding and enhancing our educational offerings.

I hope you will support our request for an I-Jobs grant and help us help our community and our children. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Steven J Schmitt, Sr.

I-Jobs Board
CVCS Application
25 July 2009

Dear Board Members:

I'm writing this letter as an endorsement in support of the CVCS application to I-Jobs. As an alumnus of twelve years of parochial education, I can attest to the quality of education and preparation for advanced degrees that a Catholic education provides. The construction of a middle school and the renovation of the elementary schools described in this application will strengthen the educational opportunities for all socioeconomic groups in the Cedar Valley.

The projects described in this application are shovel-ready, will provide immediate construction jobs, and the educational infrastructure improvements will help provide a trained work force for years to come. As the Waterloo Ward 1 Councilman and Mayor Pro Tem I whole heartedly endorse this application. I feel that the projects described in this application are an integral part of the continued economic and social growth of Waterloo and the citizens of the Cedar Valley.

Your support and approval of this application will go a long way to foster continued growth and development in Waterloo and the surrounding communities. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Reggie Schmitt
Ward 1 Councilman Waterloo
Waterloo Mayor Pro Tem

GALLAGHER, LANGLAS & GALLAGHER, P.C.

EDWARD J. GALLAGHER, JR.
THOMAS W. LANGLAS
E.J. GALLAGHER, III
GEORGE L. WEILEIN
TIMOTHY C. BOLLER
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PLEASE RESPOND TO WATERLOO OFFICE

WAVERLY OFFICE
97 E. BREMER AVENUE
WAVERLY, IOWA 50677
PHONE: (319) 352-6163
FAX: (319) 352-6164

July 23, 2009

I-Jobs Grant Committee
State Capitol
1007 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50319

I write this letter in support of the grant application filed with your organization on the part of Cedar Valley Catholic Schools (CVCS). I am a practicing attorney and senior partner in the law firm of Gallagher, Langlas & Gallagher, P.C. I have practiced law in Waterloo for over a half of a century and am familiar with the community having been born here and lived here all of my life.

I attended Sacred Heart grade school and high school in Waterloo, Loras College in Dubuque where I received a BA degree and went on to Georgetown Law School. I graduated from Georgetown in 1950 and commenced the practice of law in Waterloo in January 1951. One of my long time ambitions was to have a central Catholic high school in Waterloo and this was accomplished 50 years ago when Columbus High School was completed. As a young lawyer I worked on this project and have continued over the years to do what I could financially and in any other way for Columbus High School. My three children are graduates of St. Edward's grade school and Columbus High School. To me, these institutions have meant not only the teaching of moral and spiritual values, but have been at the top academically since their inception.

The purpose of I-Jobs, as I understand it, is to create jobs that strengthen our economy and allow us to build a safer, stronger, greener and smarter state. I hope I am able to convey to you why the grant application applied for by CVCS fulfills those objectives. I know, because of the economy, contractors are clamoring for work. Skilled artisans and laborers are out of work because of the paucity of construction projects.

Our plan for advancing Catholic education in Waterloo is to modernize the grade schools which feed Columbus High School, the central Catholic school and build a middle school to serve the 6th, 7th and 8th graders presently enrolled in our three grade schools in the Cedar Valley. Such a program has been advanced in Cedar Rapids with Xavier Middle School and Matsuchelli Catholic Middle school in Dubuque. Both of these middle schools are all ready looking for ways to expand because of the popularity of their programs, including spiritual, moral and academic excellence. We can do the same in Waterloo, except it is very difficult to raise funds at the present time to accomplish the construction of a new high school, renovation of Columbus High School and the three grade schools.

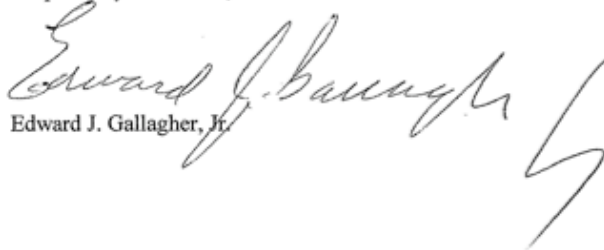
I feel that a Middle School on the Columbus campus will substantially increase enrollment at Columbus. This result has been proven in both Cedar Rapids and Waterloo. Many of us in the Cedar Valley have pledged substantial amounts towards our \$11,500,000.00 goal set by a strategic committee that worked for years on the project.

During recent years I have seen the enrollment at Columbus High School decline. The goal now is to reverse that decline and increase enrollment both in the Catholic grade schools and the Columbus, as the central high school.

In visiting with our architect and contractors in the community I have been informed that the time to commence a project such ours is now and not six months from now. Preliminary plans have been drafted by a local architect and we feel if our grant would be granted and funds were furnished quickly that we could commence our project in the Fall of this year. Certainly this project would create jobs and strengthen our economy and be a source of strength to our community. One of the side effects of all of this would be increasing the enrollment at the Catholic schools which would substantially reduce the demands upon the public schools in the community to continue to renovate and build new structures, thus being a catalyst to raise the taxes in our community for public education. The local economy would be given a shot in the arm by our project.

Therefore, I am in full support of the grant filed with you by CVCS and urge your consideration and acceptance of the grant.

Respectfully Submitted,


Edward J. Gallagher, Jr.



DATE: July 22, 2009

TO: I-JOBS Board

FROM: Geoffrey Grimes, Partner

RE: I-Jobs Application for Cedar Valley Catholic Schools

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In 1999, our firm was hired by the Cedar Valley Catholic Schools to conduct a study of their school system. Having worked in the design of school buildings for almost 40 years, I have developed some expertise in school construction and community issues surrounding schools. The result of that study showed that the Catholic Schools in the Cedar Valley were losing their market share, having been considered by most to be the premier K-12 educational option in the area since I moved here in 1969.

In interviewing parents, supporters, students and community members, the respondents pointed to several problems that needed to be addressed. Prime among those was the condition of their physical facilities and connected to that was the organization of the schools. After several options were considered, it was determined that a centralized middle school adjacent to the high school would have the ability to raise the quality of the educational delivery at all levels. It would reduce the overcrowding in the elementary schools, combine the curriculum of the middle school students into one cohesive and advanced format, and provide a better and easier transition from middle to high school for all students.

The school has taken significant steps in the last ten years to reorganize their educational structure and develop a more rigorous educational plan. The one element that remains is the need for appropriate facilities to provide the base for their educational initiatives.

The quality K-12 education in the Cedar Valley area has improved drastically over the last ten years, which has narrowed the gap between the public sector and CVCS. The Catholic system must

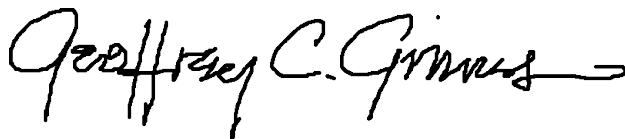
continue to implement its new educational strategies to regain its position on the top. Although facilities will not make that happen alone, it will reinforce the direction they have chosen.

The Cedar Valley Catholic Schools provides an excellent educational opportunity that transcends the ethnic diversity of the area, and provides a meaningful, faith-based option for any parent. To have this system succeed is key to the continued success of the Cedar Valley.

It helps to attract a broad cultural mix of people who bring richness and quality to the life experiences in this metro area. This diversification will make it easier and more appealing to our firm in attracting high quality staff that increasingly looks at the variety of experiences in choosing a job location.

We strongly support the enhancement of the Cedar Valley Catholic School facilities that this I-Jobs grant would aid in realizing. I urge your careful consideration of their proposal.

Sincerely,
StruXture Architects

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Geoffrey C. Grimes" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Geoffrey C. Grimes, AIA REFP
Partner

**314 E. 4th Street
Waterloo, IA 50703-4704
tel: 319.234.1515
fax: 319.234.1517**

JULY 28, 2009

To the Board of Directors
I-Jobs Program
State of Iowa

Please consider this letter as an endorsement of the Cedar Valley Catholic Schools Strategic Plan Phase I.

Personally and professionally I strongly support this project. I am personally a product of a 4 year Catholic high school and a graduate of a 4 year Catholic university. Professionally I was a practicing CPA for 35 years in the Waterloo/Cedar Falls area. I was the past president of the Waterloo Chamber of Commerce and past president of the Waterloo Industrial Development Association. I am currently on the Finance Committee of the Greater Cedar Valley Alliance(our regional Economic Development entity).From my personal and professional experience I have seen firsthand the results of a quality education provided by our local Catholic schools. I have also seen how Catholic schools have impacted minorities and low socioeconomic families who would not have had access to a Catholic education or school of their choice without aid from the system.

From an economic development standpoint I believe it is a real strength for our community to have a strong Catholic/secondary school system in our city.

Finally, this project will create jobs for the community not only now but for the future with on going need for teachers/staff and administrators.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,
Donald J. Bergan
Retired Senior Partner
Bergan, Paulsen and Company PC

HOGAN • HANSEN

A Professional Corporation
Certified Public Accountants and Consultants

July 24, 2009

Board Members
I-Jobs, Iowa's Infrastructure
Investment Initiative
Des Moines, Iowa

Letter of Support for the Application Submitted by the Cedar Valley Catholic Schools, Waterloo, Iowa

I write this letter not only as a business leader in the Waterloo community but as a parent of three students in the Cedar Valley Catholic Schools (CVCS), as well as serving as the chair of the finance committee for CVCS. We are in full support of the application being submitted by CVCS for funding to be used to construct a new middle school and make improvements to the existing high school and three elementary schools which have been neglected for far too long.

CVCS provides a safe and high-quality education to approximately 1,200 students each year. For the year ended June 30, 2008, the operating cost per student in the Waterloo Community School District was \$10,846, according to its audited financial statements. This means that the Catholic schools in Waterloo save the taxpayers of city and the state over \$13,000,000 each year by maintaining the Catholic schools as an alternative source for education.

In the past several years, the Waterloo schools have either rebuilt or renovated nearly every school building in town using local option sales taxes. The costs of operating the Catholic schools and maintaining the facilities are paid for almost exclusively from parish support and tuition. The Catholic schools have fallen behind in the quality of their facilities since they do not have the same access to tax funding that the public schools do.

This will be the largest building project that the Catholic schools have undertaken in 50 years, and will create or retain jobs in what we have learned is a softening construction market in this area. Clients in the construction industry have told me that there is no better time than now to get this project out for bid and break ground as construction material prices have fallen and the local contractors are worried about their shrinking backlog of work for the upcoming fall and winter.

The Catholic schools have always been a place open to anyone who wanted to attend. Many non-Catholics and minorities have been educated in our Catholic schools regardless of their ability to pay. We maintain an open heart and mind to all who are interested in a quality education. The Catholic schools are a vital part of the economic health of Waterloo by providing an alternative to the public schools, and by employing over 100 staff with a payroll of nearly \$5,000,000 per year.

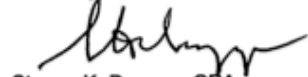
Board Members
I-Jobs, Iowa's Infrastructure
Investment Initiative
July 24, 2009
Page 2

Our firm needs individuals who possess the skills, discipline, and honesty necessary to succeed in public accounting. Students educated in the Cedar Valley Catholic Schools have these qualities instilled in them from kindergarten all the way through 12th grade, so that when they head off to college, they have the moral compass needed to help make the right decisions throughout the rest of their lives and avoid the traps of selfishness and greed.

We strongly recommend that the board approve this project for funding to improve the economic conditions in Waterloo, and help ensure that the Catholic schools can remain a viable alternative for all families in Waterloo.

Thank you very much for volunteering to be a member of the I-Jobs board and for your thorough consideration of this worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Duggan", written over a horizontal line.

Steven K. Duggan, CPA
President and Managing Principal

McCOY, RILEY, SHEA & BEVEL, P.L.C.

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JOHN T. McCOY
DAVID L. RILEY
KARLA J. SHEA
HENRY J. BEVEL, III

WRITER'S E-MAIL: jmccoy@mrsblaw.com

July 23, 2009

Grant Committee and Iowa Jobs Board
Iowa Jobs Program

RE: Iowa Jobs Program: CVCS Phase I (Public Construction Project)

Dear Sir/Madam:

Please allow this letter to strongly endorse an I-JOBS Grant for the public-construction project proposed by the Cedar Valley Catholic Schools (CVCS), Waterloo, Iowa. As a Co-chair of the CVCS Strategic Plan, I have been actively involved since June 2004 in the preparation of a long-term development plan for the Catholic schools in the Waterloo area. Unfortunately, the CVCS system has been required to close three (3) Catholic schools (St. Nick's, St. John's and St. Mary's n/k/a Queen of Peace) within the last ten (10) years. As you may already know, St. Mary's Catholic School was attended by the five Sullivan brothers who were killed in World War II.

Specific plans have been drafted and approved to preserve and strengthen the infrastructure of the local Catholic-school system by:

1. Updating the facilities at Columbus Catholic High School to improve safety and to improve academic and fine-arts opportunities for the students (Columbus is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this school year);
2. Adding a new middle school to the Columbus campus to provide a modern, safe, energy-efficient and climate-controlled educational facility for students from 6th – 8th grades (including students of Sacred Heart Catholic School which suffered damage in the 2008 floods); and

3. Renovating the local elementary schools (Blessed Sacrament, Sacred Heart and St. Edward's) to improve site security and improve academic opportunities.

In addition to providing the students of Catholic schools a safe and quality education, the Waterloo community will benefit from the continued availability of an alternative educational system and from property-tax savings because these Catholic-school students are educated outside the budget of the Waterloo Community School system. If the Catholic-school system would close, the Waterloo Community School system would be required to educate another approximate 1,000 students with the same property-tax base.

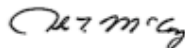
Not only would this public construction project have an immediate, positive economic impact on Northeast Iowa by the jobs created in the facilities' construction, but the project would have a long-term economic benefit by continued employment of the administration, faculty and staff of the Catholic schools. The project would also stimulate economic development by contributing to the local pool of educated employees. Columbus High School currently maintains a 100% graduation rate.

There is a scholarship program provided through CVCS which provides tuition assistance for children with family income less than 300% of the poverty level, which allows low-income families to send their children to Catholic schools. Additional CVCS scholarship funds are available for special-needs families.

Financial support of the CVCS' public construction project would substantially improve the infrastructure of our community, strengthen our economy, provide safe and modern educational facilities for a large number of children and provide immediate and long-term employment.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of the Iowa Jobs Program, and thank you for your consideration of the grant application on behalf of the Cedar Valley Catholic Schools.

Yours very truly,



John T. McCoy
for
McCOY, RILEY, SHEA & BEVEL, P.L.C.

JTM.me